

NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
INSTITUTE FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION
410 FIRST STREET, S.E.
SECOND FLOOR
WASHINGTON, DC 20003-1867



NRA

April 23, 2009

Dear Congressman Stupak:

On behalf of the National Rifle Association, I am writing to express our support of your legislation, the "Second Amendment Restoration Act," H.R. 6622 in the 110th Congress. We hope that you reintroduce it this year.

To be absolutely clear, the NRA believes it is both constitutional and appropriate to disarm convicted felons. However, we also believe that no person should lose the right to arms due to convictions for minor, non-violent crimes, especially those that occurred many years in the past.

We also believe justice is well served when a person who has fully paid his debt to society, and who has demonstrated the ability to live as a peaceful and productive member of society, has an appropriate process by which to regain lost rights.

Your bill would help address several situations where that opportunity has been denied by the courts and by executive branch interpretations. Specifically, the bill would make these changes:

- Prevent loss of firearm rights based on common-law misdemeanors that, because of old, indeterminate sentencing systems, have been treated as felonies for purposes of gun possession. We regularly receive inquiries about such cases from people convicted long ago of extremely minor crimes—such as petty larcenies committed in the 1950s and '60s. Simply because their states did not have codified sentences at the time, these people have lost the right to possess a firearm as surely as a murderer convicted yesterday.
- Make clear that a person with a misdemeanor conviction, whose civil rights were never taken away, should not be treated more harshly than a convicted felon whose rights were restored.
- Give full effect to state restorations of rights. Federal agency and court interpretations have often nullified state policy decisions in this area, where states should have discretion to act according to the needs of their citizens.

We look forward to working with you on this legislation, and if there is anything we can do to assist, please do not hesitate to contact me personally.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chuck Cunningham".

Charles H. Cunningham
Director of Federal Affairs

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